AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Page 11

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 22 through Page 12, line 8 as follows:

A first invention of the present application relates to an encoding device for encoding a plurality of pieces of position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises rearranging ~~means~~unit for rearranging, in a predetermined order relationship, the plurality of pieces of position information to be encoded, determining ~~means~~unit for determining, in accordance with the predetermined order relationship, a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information from among the plurality of pieces of position information output from the rearranging ~~means~~unit, and encoding ~~means~~ unit for outputting a code corresponding to the branch layer.

Page 12

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 9 through line 20 as follows:

A second invention of the present application relates to an encoding device for encoding a plurality of pieces of position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, the plurality of pieces of position information to be encoded being arranged in a predetermined order relationship, and comprises determining ~~means~~unit for determining, in accordance with the predetermined order relationship, a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information from among the plurality of pieces of position information to be encoded, and encoding ~~means~~unit for outputting a code corresponding to the branch layer.

Page 13

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 2 through line 16 as follows:

A fourth invention of the present application relates to an encoding device for encoding a plurality of pieces of position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises incremental width determining ~~means~~unit for determining an incremental width of the value of the position information based on the plurality of pieces of position information to be encoded, incremental width encoding ~~means~~unit for encoding the incremental width and outputting the encoded incremental width, determining ~~means~~unit for determining a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information from among the plurality of pieces of position information to be encoded, and branch layer encoding ~~means~~unit for outputting a code corresponding to the branch layer.

Page 16

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 18 through Page 17, line 5 as follows:

A thirteenth invention of the present application relates to a decoding device for decoding a string of position information code composed of a plurality of pieces of encoded position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises storage ~~means~~unit for successively storing decoded position information, determining ~~means~~unit for determining a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information based on the position information code, and decoding ~~means~~unit for ~~increasing~~ updating the value of the position information, stored in the storage ~~means~~unit, corresponding to the branch layer by one notch in accordance with a predetermined order relationship.

Page 17

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 6 through line 9 as follows:

A fourteenth invention of the present application further comprises rearranging ~~means~~unit for rearranging the plurality of pieces of decoded position information in accordance with the order of magnitude from large to small.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 10 through line 15 as follows:

A fifteenth invention of the present application relates to the decoding device according to the fourteenth invention, wherein the rearranging ~~means~~unit further comprises calculating ~~means~~unit for calculating a serial number assigned to each piece of the decoded position information, the serial number representing the order of magnitude.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 24 through Page 18, line 12 as follows:

A seventeenth invention of the present application relates to a decoding device for decoding a string of position information code composed of a plurality of pieces of encoded position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises incremental width decoding ~~means~~unit for decoding an incremental width of the value of the position information, storage ~~means~~unit for successively storing the decoded position information, determining ~~means~~unit for determining a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information based on the position information code, and position information decoding ~~means~~unit for ~~increasing~~ updating the value of the position information, stored in the storage ~~means~~unit, corresponding to the branch layer by the incremental width.

Page 18

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 20 through Page 19, line 7 as follows:

A nineteenth invention of the present application relates to a decoding method for decoding a string of position information code composed of a plurality of pieces of encoded position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises a storage step of successively storing decoded position information, a determining step of determining a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information based on the position information code, and a decoding step of ~~increasing~~ updating the value of the position information, stored in the storage step, corresponding to the branch layer by one notch in accordance with a predetermined order relationship.

Page 20

Please amend the paragraph beginning on line 1 through line 15 as follows:

A twenty-third invention of the present application relates to a decoding method for decoding a string of position information code composed of a plurality of pieces of encoded position information corresponding to a plurality of leaves and/or nodes at the same layer in a tree structure, and comprises an incremental width decoding step of decoding an incremental width of the value of the position information, a storage step of successively storing the decoded position information, a determining step of determining a branch layer of two consecutive pieces of position information based on the position information code, and a position information decoding step of ~~increasing~~ updating the value of the position information, stored in the storage step, corresponding to the branch layer by the incremental width.